



Docket No. 12969

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

5 Applicant: Bitler et al Group Art Unit: 1714
Serial No.: 09/398,377 Examiner: Peter Szekely
Filing Date: 09/17/1999
Title: Polymeric Thickeners for Oil-containing Compositions

10 Mail Stop AF
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

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REPLY

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS

20 This paper is a reply to the Office Action mailed January 21, 2004, which is a final rejection.

Re-examination, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested in view of the Amendments and Remarks below, and the accompanying Declaration. It is submitted that the accompanying declaration should be admitted, even if the finality of the office action is maintained, since most of the declaration does no more than affirm facts previously set out as part of the arguments in support of patentability, and insofar as it goes further than that, merely provides a technical explanation for the benefit of the Examiner. It is submitted that the amendments requested below should be entered, even if the finality of the office action is maintained, for the reasons set out below in connection with those amendments.

30 **CERTIFICATE OF MAILING UNDER 37 CFR 1.8**

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first-class mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop AF, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450
On March 5, 2004 Typed name of person signing this certificate: T. H. F. Richardson

Signature

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